

**REMARKS**

It appears that the examiner meant to acknowledge the election of claims 1-34, 47 and 48, since claims 47 and 48 are addressed in the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 citing Fraczek.

Independent claims 1, 47, and 48 have been amended to more clearly define over the art of record. The specification has been amended to provide specific antecedent basis for language in claims 2, 47, and 48. From the examples given on page 5 and the specification as a whole, it should be clear that the terms "production information" and "operating data" refer to "production history information". This information forms a component of the characteristic data which is used to determine suitability, i.e., reusability, for a specific print job. See page 6, lines 6-12; page 11, lines 10-16; and page 24, line 20 to page 25, line 2.

Claims 1-19, 21, 23, 33 and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by Nakamura et al. U.S. 5,113,349. To the extent that this reference would be applied against claim 1 as presently amended, such a rejection is traversed for the reasons following.

Nakamura discloses a transmission/reception circuit 12 which receives inventory data from answer units 30 on pallets and storage shelves, and relays data back and forth between a host computer 10 and a terminal device 20 on a conveying unit such as a forklift. See col. 5, lines 10-20. As stated at col. 5, lines 62-66, "The answer unit 32 prestores data relating to the articles stored thereon, e.g., identification and description of the articles, quantity of the articles, manufacturing dates, date of storage, etc."

Nakamura does not disclose or suggest means anywhere in the system for determining the suitability of sleeves for a specific print job in accordance with characteristic data

stored in a main electronic memory device. Accordingly, claim 1 is felt to distinguish patentably over this reference. Claim 2 distinguishes still further by reciting the production history of a rubber-covered cylinder sleeve as a component of the characteristic data used to determine the suitability for a specific print job.

Claims 47 and 48 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by Fraczek U.S. 5,323,704. To the extent that this rejection would be applied to claims as presently amended, it is traversed for the reasons following.

Fraczek discloses embedding a microchip in a rubber blanket for identifying same via a scanning device. The identifying data includes, for example, the life-span of the rubber blanket or the usefulness thereof for an application in connection with certain printing inks. See col. 2, lines 1-4. In other words, the information is the unchanging type of information referred to in the present application as permanent information. See page 5, lines 1-7. There is no suggestion of assigning characteristic data including production history information to the identifier or auxiliary memory device, as recited in claims 47 and 48. It is this information, in addition to permanent information, which permits determining the suitability of a sleeve for a specific print job, as recited in claims 49 and 50.

The claims as amended being definite and patentably distinguishable from the art of record, withdrawal of the rejections and early allowance are solicited.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application; however, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to

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